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*The Kunde Hospital is the only one in the high Everest isolated region of Nepal. Originally the hospital was run by foreign doctors but the clinic is now staffed and run by the local Sherpa population. Joanna Jolly reports:.*

Set up in 1966 by Sir Edmund Hillary, Kunde Hospital is at a height of 3,840 metres. For many of its 8,000 patients, visiting the clinic means walking for hours through high-mountain passes. The hospital is **mainly funded by foreign donations** and was originally run by doctors from Canada and New Zealand. But for the past ten years, this 12-bed clinic high up in the Himalayas has been staffed by the local **Sherpa** population. The current doctor, Dr Tsering Wangdi Sherpa, is the third **Sherpa** doctor to work at the clinic. The first was his father who **was provided with a grant** from the Sir Edmund Hillary foundation of Canada to train. Dr Tsering says without the hospital, there would be little health care in the Khumbu district.

Dr Tsering: 'It's actually very important to have this hospital because, if you look back at the history - this hospital was built in 1966 - and before that, the health system here was absolutely bad. There was a lot of problems with **birth control**, immunization, people had a lot of very bad infections, **the hygiene was really bad**. They had a lot of problems with **iodine deficiencies causing cretinism** and lots of cases of **tuberculosis** causing a lot of deaths.'

Dr Tsering says thanks to injections provided by the hospital, problems due to iodine deficiency have been **virtually wiped out**. The hospital has also improved hygiene in the region and provided **family planning services**. Dr Tsering says the introduction of Sherpa staff at Kunde Hospital has meant the clinic is able to function more smoothly and **no longer needs to rely on translators**. He says, because of the hospital, many young people from this impoverished region of Nepal are now looking towards a career in medicine.

Joanna Jolly, BBC News

## Vocabulary and definitions

<b>is mainly funded by foreign donations</b>	most of the money for the hospital comes from people outside Nepal
<b>Sherpa</b>	Himalayan person who is a skilled mountain climber and who is often employed as a guide by visiting climbers
<b>was provided with a grant</b>	was given some money (here, from the Sir Edmund Hilary foundation) for a special purpose (here, studying)
<b>birth control</b>	different methods or types of equipment that allow people to have sex without having children
<b>the hygiene was really bad</b>	people weren't washing enough to keep clean and so be free of disease
<b>iodine deficiencies causing cretinism</b>	not having a special element (iodine) found in sea water and which is used to prevent infection. This lack of iodine causes problems (both physical and mental) in the way that people grow
<b>tuberculosis</b>	(often shortened to TB) a serious disease which is infectious and can attack many parts of a person's body, especially their lungs
<b>virtually wiped out</b>	when a disease is virtually wiped out, it is almost completely eradicated or it almost no longer exists
<b>family planning services</b>	offering people methods of contraception (ways of preventing a woman becoming pregnant) to control how many children you have and when you have them
<b>no longer needs to rely on translators</b>	don't need to have people who can speak the same languages as the patients and the doctors, and who can tell both the patients and doctors what the other ones are saying

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